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gfiles
INSIDE THE GOVERNMENT

'Delhi's transport scenario will change completely in two years'

FOTOS4INDIA

BIG BOSS

chief secretary, delhi | rakesh mehta

interviewed by ANIL TYAGI

Former Commissioner of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi, Rakesh Mehta of the IAS' 1975-batch AGMUT cadre handled six key portfolios before becoming Chief Secretary of Delhi. His academic degrees include MA (History), MSc (Social Policy and Planning) from the London School of Economics, and BA (Honours) from St Stephen's College, New Delhi. Mehta has been involved in public administration. His recent postings have been as Principal Secretary, Power; Chairman and Managing Director, Transco; and Chairman, Genco, NCT of Delhi. As Principal Secretary, Power he started the Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy Management Centre in Delhi Transco Ltd. As Commissioner, MCD, he initiated major reforms in municipal governance including Public-Private Partnership in garbage management, sanitary land filling, and parking infrastructure. As CMD of Delhi Transport Corporation, he introduced 2,000 CNG buses in 14 months. He also brought out an Action Plan for Energy Efficiency in collaboration with TERI. Mehta, who comes from Gujarat, is known for punctuality, cordiality and dislike of pending work.

gfiles: *How do you see Delhi, in terms of a model of governance?*

Rakesh Mehta: Delhi has some very distinctive features, like chaos and diversity. Things are changing, it is a globalized world. People would look for uniformity, now they are looking for kaleidoscopic variety and chaos. You can see cultural, ethnic and regional diversity. You can see urban agglomeration in Delhi. You see the walled city, the Lutyens zone, upmarket colonies like Vasant Vihar, and Dilshad Garden. There are authorized, unauthorized, and regularized unauthorized colonies.

As Commissioner, Municipal Corporation, I started the heritage walk and invited a couple of ambassadors. It was 7.30 am. We walked from Jain Mandir to Jama Masjid. They parked their cars at

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BIG BOSS

the Red Fort. When the walk finished, I wanted to send them by car to the parking lot. They jumped into a rickshaw instead. People like to see how a city lives.

gfiles: *What are the Delhi government's priorities?*

RM: It is a city in rapid transition from rural to urban. By 2021, Delhi will be totally urbanized, with 24 million people. It will be all urban management issues, of water, education, health, transport and social security. We have the Commonwealth Games in 2010, an opportunity to visualize how Delhi will look in 2021.

The governance model must ensure automatic delivery of citizens' entitlements without their having to run around. We have taken a baby step in this direction, Mission Convergence. We are tracking people not being provided health, education, ration cards etc, a network of facilities through nine departments. We have evolved a single delivery system through District Magistrates. To track, we have issued smart cards.

'Privatization of power was Delhi government's best decision. Foreign countries are studying our method'

gfiles: *Delhi's perennial problem is said to be the multiplicity of authorities. Coordination among the agencies is an uphill task....*

RM: All mega cities have this problem. There are ways of solving it. There are people who say the political structure needs to be changed. The debate can go on. But we can't sit back till the problem is sorted out. How do we overcome these difficulties and how do we respond in a manner that addresses citizens' concerns even while these constraints exist? I don't think the answer lies in having a unitary authority. For example, the fire service is highly specialized. It's the same with housing, policing. New York, London, Tokyo are managed like that.

gfiles: *Do you think multiple authorities will work in unison in your programme, Mission Convergence?*

RM: Multiple authorities can function. But all should agree to use a common technological system. We went to China during the Olympics and found a common communication system in operation, be it police, water, transport, health, security etc. I made a presentation to a committee of Secretaries. Lieutenant-Governor Tejinder Khanna called a meeting of every department and said we need a common communication system. This will be used during the Commonwealth Games.

gfiles: *Malthus said population grows in the 2,4,8,16 ratio whereas resources grow in the 1,2,3,4 ratio. But in Delhi, the population grows in the 2,4,16, 256 ratio.*

RM: Every city has to face this problem. We had a National Capital Region (NCR) plan, it did not take off. Therefore Delhi has this problem. There are more restrictions in the new master plan. There are restrictions on what kind of industries can be set up.

gfiles: *Are restrictions effective? Look at Lawrence Road, Ashok Vihar, Shakarpur, Madipur, Shahdara, Kalkaji, etc. Industries are running under your nose.*

RM: That was 40 years ago. The thinking was that people should live near industrial places. Now the policy has changed. With the new industrial policy, focus is on manufacturing. India is urbanizing, new urban centres will be coming up so people need not go to the old urban centres. The new ones will have better facilities. Delhi is no longer cheap. People will go where there is employment, and the atmosphere is better.

We have taken the help of the Department of Space. Delhi data is being digitized. We will know who is where and what he is doing.

gfiles: *Every day we read in the newspapers about traffic jams. You have 40 lakh vehicles in the city. How are you going to solve this problem?*

RM: All big cities have managed this problem by two measures. One, restriction on car ownership. Two, promotion of multimode transport systems. There is no third solution. The government has decided that all the buses will be low-floor buses, 50 per cent will be air-conditioned and 17 private companies will operate these buses apart from Delhi Transport Corporation. You want safe, comfortable and affordable transport system. In two years, the scenario

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LETTERS: Congratulations to Maj Gen Mrinal Suman for boldly arguing against the induction of women in active combat duties without sounding a male chauvinist in the least. Wars cannot be fought and won by empty slogans of women's empowerment and concerns

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From the Editor-in-Chief

ALL hell is breaking loose in Indian cities. We watch with helpless horror as motorcyclists hurl hand grenades in flower markets and plant bombs and crude explosive devices, almost at will, in bazaars, lanes, and transportation systems. Theories about the perpetrators fly fast and furious. Intelligence agencies and local police departments vie with each other to name the masterminds, lay out elaborate plots and grand designs, speculate about international terror groups, claim victories in shootouts, pontificate on conspiracy theories, and boast about having "finally cracked" the ring.

The media, too, flits from one theory to another, politicians harangue the public about speedy death sentences, harsher laws, minority appeasement, and minority insecurities and persecution. But the truth is, no one really knows for sure what is really going on. This editorial is not to support or to debunk any theory or point of view. Its focus is on a severe dislocation of governance that directly impacts on the gathering of information on the basis of which any administration or government in power provides security to all citizens.

Unlike the US, where the new Homeland Security bureaucracy was created to anticipate and prevent terror attacks through careful vigilance, monitoring and counter-intelligence post 9/11, India has not even begun to grapple with the subject of modernizing and equipping our services to deal with terror notwithstanding the Parliament attack and the ghastly incidents that have followed with rapid-fire regularity.

RAW, the IB, CBI, urban police departments – created for administrative and policing chores with specific mandates – are simply not equipped or capable of dealing with urban terrorism. Encounters and confessions in police custody are not the answer. The critical elements are intelligence and prevention. And, believe it or not, the spirit behind the screation of the IAS and IPS – did create the right conditions for the achievement of these twin goals.

At the pure administrative level, the prevention of terror is a grassroots governance phenomenon. In the last couple of decades this has just about vanished as district bureaucrats and policemen have been forced to neglect their real duties and perform tasks assigned to them by power-hungry politicians. In the old days, the District Magistrate, the Superintendent of Police roamed their districts on foot, in jeeps, on horseback. They camped for nights in villages. Their headquarters were open durbars for grievance redressal. They were men and women of the people.

Because they were trusted by ordinary folk in whose interests they slogged day and night, they received valuable information. They knew where dacoits would be hiding. They would personally be aware of "bad characters" and bigots and people planning communal violence. They could persuade village elders to take steps to rein in the "badmaashes." There was a huge two-way communication – this is real intelligence – that could help prevent clashes, prevent violent incidents, and above all, lead to the arrest of the real culprits.

Arresting the real culprits is what gives law enforcement the credibility it needs to win the confidence of people and receive valuable intelligence. Arrest the wrong man, and you create enemies out of people who would be your friends and informants.

That is what has happened in India. Intelligence that leads to prevention of violence has dried up because the bureaucracy has moved away from the common man. The common man sees the bureaucrat as an enemy who serves the political master rather than the interests of the needy. This is particularly true in cities. As India urbanizes rapidly, there is an almost total disconnect between city administrations and mohallas and colonies. The police has not been modernized to interact with the huge socio-economic problems and disruptions of the traditional patterns of life and breakup of families that accompanies the mushrooming of cities.

Dealing with urban terrorism certainly requires a strong hand. But the hand can only be strengthened when governmental and police organizations are modernized, reconstituted and decentralized into the neighbourhoods where real people live in order to feel and to deal with their insecurities and grievances. That would be the first concrete step against terror. Band-Aid reactions will not work.

gfiles family wishes a very happy, prosperous and violence free Diwali.

INDERJIT BADHWAR

LETTERS

Continued from page 3

about gender bias in the armed forces. The inhuman treatment meted out to Indian soldiers captured by an enemy country during wartime has always shocked the nation.

Do the politicians want to subject women soldiers to such treatment and at the same time be called champions of gender equality? Women wanting to have equality only in the officer cadre and not in other ranks is more hypocrisy than anomaly.

Ramesh Kalra, Bhopal

All Chief Ministers of Uttar Pradesh have functioned with their chosen courtiers. Mayawati has not set any new trend. Kamlapati Tripathi, VP Singh,Vir Bahadur Singh, Kalyan Singh, Rajnath Singh and Mulayam Singh Yadav were more dictatorial than her.

In fact, the three-ring coterie has courtiers from almost every caste and religion – a departure from previous regimes. So why single out Mayawati? What purpose will it serve in advocating good governance?

Dinesh Sonkar, Kanpur

The report "Whose side is SEBI on?" rightly exposes the regulator's deliberate inaction in certain high-profile cases which were nothing less than a full-fledged stock market scam. The small investors are gradually losing faith in the regulator's ability to punish mighty corporate houses like Reliance which boast of having the largest number of small shareholders.

Why has the report, despite mentioning IFCI, not exposed it? Do you intend to shield the company or are there other motives?

Kishore Ghia, Rajkot

My attention is drawn to a story published in the September issue of *gfiles* on Doordarshan's coverage of the Olympics, which has surprisingly been attributed to me. There seems to have been a *faux pax* at your end, as the story I had sent was about my recollections of Mohammad Rafi.

Vinod Kapoor, New Delhi

(The article was written in-house and mistakenly attributed to Vinod Kapoor. The error is regretted - Editor)

BIG BOSS

Face-lift for Connaught Place: a beginning

'By 2021, Delhi will be totally urbanized, with 24 million people. My biggest challenge is providing the best governance structures and systems'

Continued from page 2

will change completely.

gfiles: *Flood, heavy rain, power failure, bad roads: it appears the Delhi administration wakes up late as it is not aware of the problems.*

RM: This time we had 4.5 lakh cusecs of water released. The flood water was going beyond 4.5 to 5.2, the highest in 20 years. Nobody drowned. When we do things quietly, people don't notice. There is a problem with the drainage system in Delhi. It cannot cope with heavy rain. The capacity of the soil to absorb water has gone down. We have not put in rain water absorbing structures in the past. We need to create high capacity for absorbing sudden discharge of rain water.

gfiles: *In comparison to other states, Delhi is considered conservative as far as the housing sector is concerned. DDA is proving a non-performing asset.*

RM: Now the master plan has changed and private builders will be allowed to build. The Ministry of Urban Development has to make regulations for this process to start. If we move too fast, people might say you don't have water, electricity, why are you allowing construction? Public-private partnership of housing is now going to take off with the new master plan 2020. We have started PPP for police housing and general pool housing. We are moving towards PPP in all kinds of projects like orphanages, women's homes, old age homes, children's homes, trauma services, hospitals. This will change the whole governance system. You get to know new technology, new contractual arrangements.

gfiles: *What is your experience with privatization of electricity?*

RM: It was the best decision the Delhi government has taken. Political and administrative delegations are coming to study it. Even countries in Africa, even Pakistan wants to know how we have done this. The point is that it is a regulated system. You have five players – the generating company, distribution company, transmission company, the government and the consumer. All are powerful. After this you have a statutory regulator, empowered to balance the interest of the five players in the field.

It was earlier a monolithic body where decisions were taken politically and there was little professionalism. The regulator's capacity to take decisions must be enhanced. Most other states failed to carry out reforms. Delhi is a perfect example of a pure set of reforms as envisaged under the Electricity Act. Results you can see. The Delhi government is in a position to invest

FOTOS4INDIA

Delhi is clogged with 40 lakh vehicles

'Big cities solved this problem by two measures, restriction on car ownership and multi-mode transport systems. There is no third solution'

Rs 30,000 crore in the generation sector alone in power. We have signed PPPs for 6000 MW of power, which will start rolling from the next year. Banks would not have given the loan. It was a loss-making sector.

gfiles: *The common man's complaint is that he is not heard and his problems not solved. Electricity companies have become judges, passing judgment. Even the consumer courts are not allowed to hear the cases.*

RM: It is not that such an order did not exist in the past but because there was an unhealthy relationship between the inspector and the consumer, orders of the government would not be implemented. In the process, the government was losing heavily. Now the losses have come down from 55 per cent to 25 per cent. In the case of North Delhi Power Ltd, it is 18 per cent. Unless the losses come down to 15 per cent, the target fixed by the Prime Minister in the last Power Ministers' conference, we cannot see self-sustained growth. Ultimately, somebody has to pay for the power. Cheats should not get away. We have set up public grievances cells headed by High Court judges to hear the problems. Meter testing is done by Central Power Research Institute, Bangalore. The changes in the power sector should be seen as a paradigm shift in the management of this sector.

gfiles: *Every summer, Delhi faces acute water shortage. The water bodies are dry or dirty. At places, people have sold the land of water bodies.*

RM: Water availability is limited by the river. Yamuna is the only river where there are no dams. We are going ahead with three dams–Renuka, Kshishau and Lakhwarvyasi. Work on Renuka will start in June 2009, which will give us the water we need. Regarding water pollution, we are seriously concerned for the first time.

gfiles: *Have you ever seen as dirty a river as the Yamuna in any city abroad? What are you going to do about it?*

RM: We are going to construct a system of interceptor sewers on both sides of the river. It is costing Rs 3000 crore. Work is on, 50 per cent of it will be completed by 2010. All encroachers have been removed from the river banks.

gfiles: *The Chief Secretary plays a vital role in managing law and order. He controls the state. Don't you think Delhi Police should be under your control?*

RM: In Delhi the Lieutenant-Governor holds the meeting with the Police Commissioner and I attend. I am briefed about what is going on. There is a lot to do regarding policing in the country and in Delhi. It is not possible for the Chief Secretary to be in touch with all this.

gfiles: *After the bomb blasts, people feel that every citizen should have an identity card. What are you planning?*

RM: People are talking about how to keep track of who is who. These are social sector schemes. The voter ID card is fine. There is a problem about identifying people who come from outside Delhi every day. What mechanism should be adopted? It has to be discussed.

gfiles: *You have 40 government and 200 private hospitals in Delhi. The condition of the government hospitals is pathetic.*

RM: One thing I want to say: 20-25 per cent patients in Delhi hospitals are from outside Delhi. There are issues of service quality which need addressing. One difficulty is that we construct the hospital but don't get human resources for it. All the posts have to be filled through UPSC. Now we are starting our own Delhi Health Service Cadre. Even paramedical posts will be filled in three months. Then there is the issue of management of the hospital. We have two hospitals ready – a 600-bed hospital in Tahirpur and a 300-bed hospital in Janakpuri. We have decided on PPP. It will start in six months. We need innovative solutions to problems.

gfiles: *Parking is another problem. The administration charges thrice for the same vehicle – for registration, for authorized parking, for unauthorized parking. Mafias are working. Multiplicity of parking charges is a problem. People cannot park their vehicles in their residential colonies.*

RM: We have limited space for parking. MCD and local bodies are constructing underground parking. This is expensive. The construction of a one-car parking space is Rs 2.5 lakh. For a bus, it is Rs 8 lakh. Delhi is growing by 10 per cent a year for the last 10 years.

gfiles: *What about adulteration of food and medicine, and the exorbitant prices of eatables?*

RM: We monitor prices every day. We have a mechanism for prices. We have *kendriya bhandar*s. Whenever we need vegetables, we buy. We have a drug administrator, we have the food adulteration department. The adulteration law is very strict. I am not saying we are perfect, there is scope for improvement. No city's population grows eating adulterated food. g

Prasad cut to size
rebuffed by ideologue

BJP spokesperson Ravi Shankar Prasad was dealt a nasty shock recently when he attempted to curtail the TV appearance of a man who is an independent ideologue and political analyst. The electronic media finds it difficult to find anyone in the BJP to speak rationally on controversial issues and an English news channel had invited this ideologue for a group discussion on the allotment and subsequent cancellation of land to the Amarnath shrine board, resulting in widespread protests in Jammu and Kashmir.

Midway through the discussion, the person received a call from a facilitator who conveyed that Prasad was displeased with his frequent appearances on TV and that the BJP had not authorized him to speak on its behalf. The ideologue replied that he was not a member of either the BJP or any of its outfits and he was invited by the electronic media as an independent expert. Convey this to Prasad and ask him not to interfere in my personal freedom, he said. The call was disconnected at once and nothing further was heard from Prasad.

Hazards in Rudy's life
liquid refreshments and fire

BEVERAGES that were categorized as forbidden fruit in the saffron party before its debut in North Block are now all the rage among the new crop of flamboyant leaders. And, surprisingly, the party high command appears reluctant to read them the riot act. The latest addition to the list of such leaders as Sanjay Joshi and Prakash Javadekar is the former Civil Aviation Minister and Rajya Sabha MP, Rajiv Pratap Rudy. While holidaying last month in a south Indian city, Rudy was roused from sleep by a call from the caretaker of his official residence on Shahjahan Road, New Delhi.

The caretaker said a fire had broken out in such and such room and would soon spread to the adjacent room.

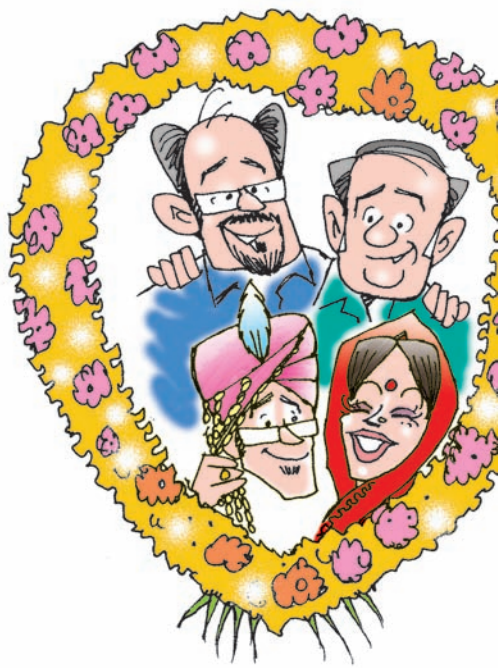
Rudy ordered him to bring the fire under control at any cost before it spread to the other room. And, he cautioned, don't call the fire brigade.

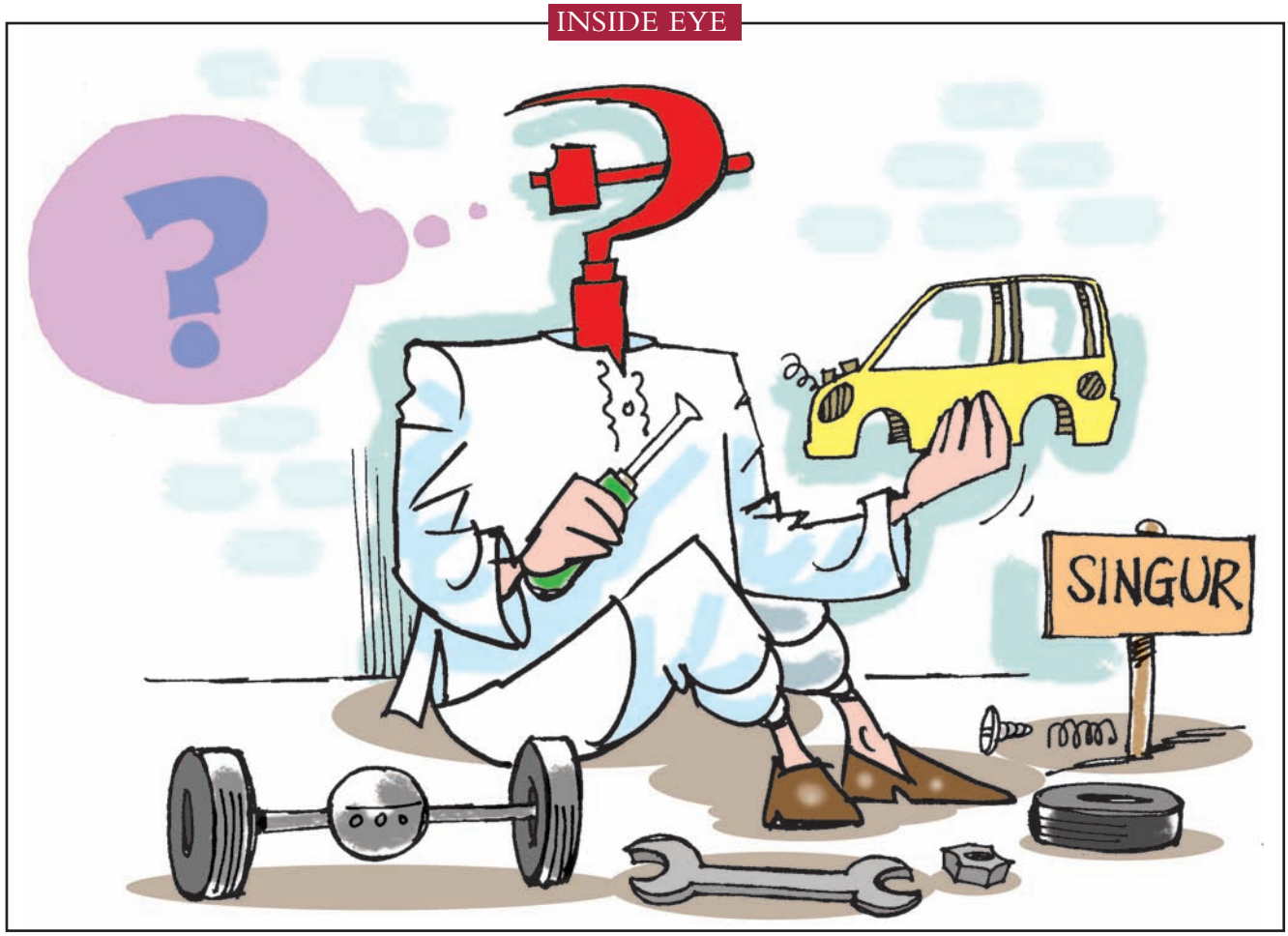
The staff understood the boss' concerns at once. The adjacent room contained a stock of an inflammable liquid and the resultant explosion would have invited the attention of the long arm of the law and the even longer nose of the media.

Much to Rudy's relief, the fire was put out and none came to know – except *gfiles*.

UP babu's ascent to grace
eligible son turns talisman

A SEEMINGLY impending matrimonial alliance is currently determining who enjoys the preeminent position in Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Mayawati's secretariat, enjoying immu-





ILLUSTRATIONS: ARUNA

nity from her infamous mood swings. The political architect of the social engineering concept that brought the Dalit leader to power has lately played kingmaker, lavishing important assignments on a civil servant who had earlier been virtually dumped in an unimportant department on return from Central deputation.

Both belong to the same caste and sources say the bureaucrat owes his sudden turn of luck to none other than his extremely eligible bachelor son. The young man is pursuing engineering studies abroad and has caught the fancy of his father's political mentor, who has a daughter of marriageable age.

As yet, the subject of marriage has not been broached. But if, as the girl's papa desires, the engagement does take place, the favours already bestowed on the boy's father will turn out an innovative dowry.

Kalmadi's Pune games
pawar foils game plan

DELHI is set to undergo cosmetic surgery at a huge cost to make it presentable to visitors during the 2010 Commonwealth Games. Power, water, transport and sanitation infrastructure will be on a par with Western cities, or so the government claims. Let us hope Delhi does not go the Pune way.

Suresh Kalmadi, President of the Indian Olympic Association and Chairman of the Commonwealth Games' organizing committee, is also Congress Lok Sabha MP from Pune. When he announced that Pune would be the venue for the Youth Commonwealth Games, it was the coming general election and not the Games that was uppermost in his mind.

He thought, correctly, that Pune would benefit from a huge government budget and the entire government machinery would come together to give the city a face-lift. And the credit would be his – to be encashed in the election.

But Sharad Pawar, Union Minister for Agriculture, Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, has put paid to all of Kalmadi's plans. Through his nephew, Ajit Pawar, who is a Cabinet Minister in Maharashtra, Pawar has ensured that the city administration is not cooperating with Kalmadi. g

TALK TIME

dm, araria | indra sen singh

Facing the fury of the Kosi

Born in Jaunpur, Uttar Pradesh, Indra Sen Singh secured an MSc in physics from Banaras Hindu University and then joined the Bihar Civil Services in 1977. He upgraded to the IAS' 1995 batch in March this year. Over three decades, he has been Deputy Collector in Dehri-on-Sone, Giridih, Singhbhum and Katihar; Executive Magistrate in Hazipur, Vaishali, Raxaul, Betia and Buxer; Deputy Director, Consolidation in Katihar; Secretary, Sone Command Area Development Agency (SCADA); and Deputy Divisional Commissioner, Motihari. As DM of trouble-torn Araria, he leaves home at 9 am and returns at midnight. For him, there is no respite from work. When not in his office, he runs it through his mobile phone. There are no weekly offs for him and every day is given as much to the public as to his family. He travels nearly 100 km every day to keep track of what is happening in his area. ***Tara Patkar*** *talked to him en route to his flood relief camp office at Forbesganj:*

gfiles: *After the devastation by the Kosi, your district is the focus of national attention. Your responsibilities have increased. How are you managing the challenge?*

Indra Sen Singh: This is the first time that Araria also has faced the Kosi's fury. Araria is not badly affected but it is surrounded by the worst-affected districts like Supaul, Purnea, Saharsa etc. When they were in trouble, we had to play the role of a good neighbour. It was a big challenge for us. First the rescue operation was the challenge and then the rehabilitation. We rescued 27,405 people between August 31 and September 11 with the help of many rescue agencies, including the ITBP, CRPF, SSB, Navy and Army personnel. They are living in 69 camps. As far as Araria is concerned, 3,86,328 people and 80,000 animals from 96 villages are flood-affected. We are arranging food, clothes and tents for them. We also set up 42 medical camps for people and 13 for animals. In rehabilitation camps, 246 toilets and 173 hand pumps were set up. I am regularly visiting all these places and taking all complaints seriously.

gfiles: *Political parties are blaming each other for the tragedy and their leaders are coming to this area to see the people's plight. Ministers are also paying visits. They all give you so many instructions. How do you deal with them?*

ISS: I am convening all-party meetings every two or three days. I listen, note down their complaints and request them to help me in solving the problems. I also involve local media in the process. When there is transparency in all activities, it becomes easier to manage difficult problems. A district-level advisory and emergency committee has also been formed. It includes the minister in charge, MLA, MP and other public representatives along with other officers. A 24-hour flood control room has been set up at my residence. The public can contact me directly on my mobile. The block-level flood management committee has been formed to look after the problems of flood victims. We are making cards for victims in which the details about the loss and damage suffered will be registered. We have formed various cells to manage records of all relief materials like NGO cell, material cell, boat cell, vehicle cell.

Administering vaccines: preventive measure

'I have instructed the officials to make entries for every item received, whether money or goods'

gfiles: *There is a feeling that the huge funds generated will not reach where they are needed due to corruption in the system.*

ISS: I have instructed the officials to make entries for each and every item received, whether money or goods, and issue receipts. Proper documentation is being maintained in relief camps so that there is transparency.

gfiles: *Do you meet the public on a particular day to listen to their problems?*

ISS: When I joined here on March 18 this year, I felt that Thursday would be a good day to meet the public due to less work pressure. So the hours between 11 am and 1 pm have been set apart for them to come and share their problems. Most of the cases relate to land disputes, police atrocities and irregularities in teachers' appointments. I have also said that all departmental heads must be present in office to redress the people's problems. With the help of the district police chief, I started the Tiger Mobile Seva to check crime. It got a positive response and the public has got respite from crime.

gfiles: *What is the ethnicity of the district?*

ISS: Araria is Muslim-dominated. Over 40 per cent of the population is Muslim. Santhal, Mahadalit and Rishidev are other important communities. Earlier, Araria was a subdivision of Purnea district. It became a district on January 14, 1990.

gfiles: *What should be done regarding flood and water management?*

ISS: India needs to evolve a larger, integrated water management strategy with Nepal, China, Pakistan and Bangladesh. There are 200 small and large rivers between India and Nepal. The more the trust between neighbours, the better the river management. The two sides have not reached an agreement on building the Kosi dam despite years of talks. Nepal is not keen because it will mean dislocation of people even though it would generate power. But a dam may not solve the entire problem, a combination strategy of decelerating water flow and massive reforestation in Nepal is also needed. India could garner support there by creating stakeholders through poverty alleviation projects instead of just being bogged down in technical reports. g

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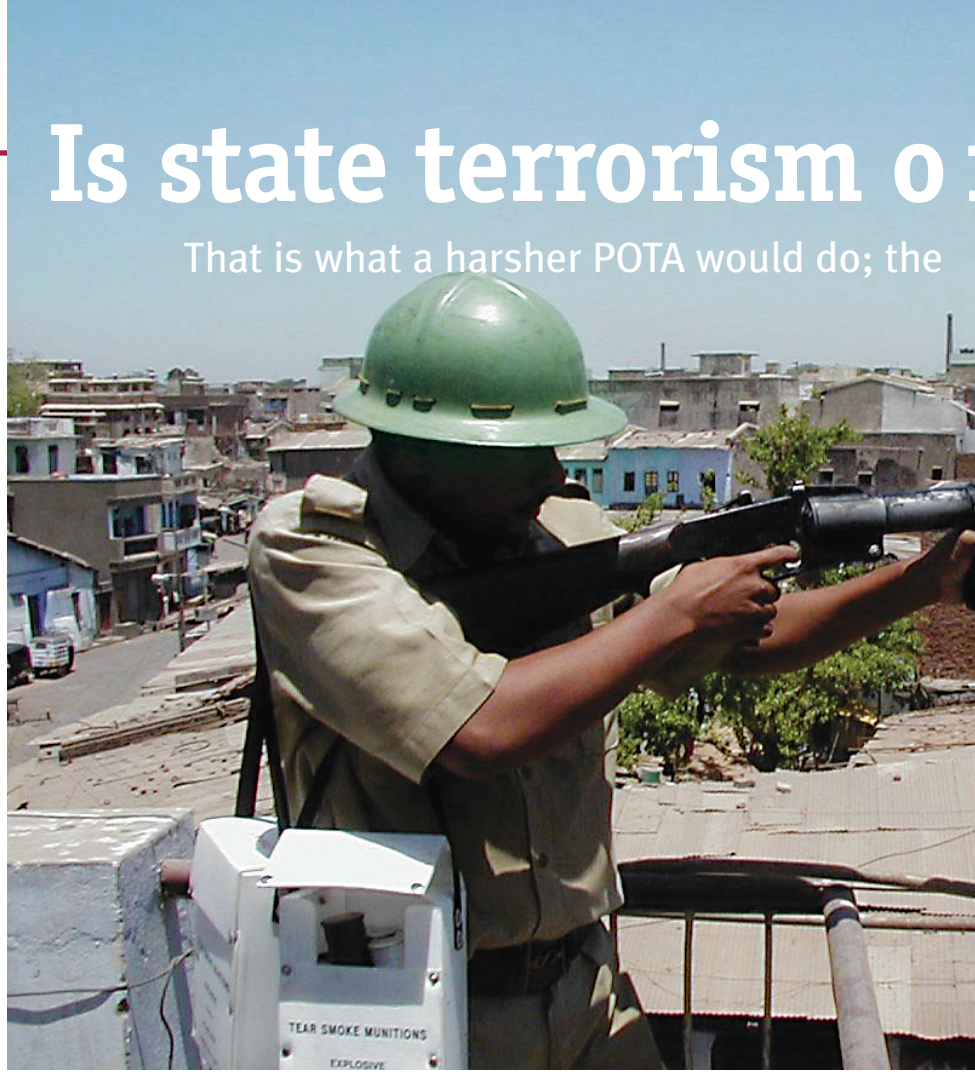
Is state terrorism o

That is what a harsher POTA would do; the



Policing neighbourhoods: deadly odds

BY MG DEVASAHAYAM

UNION Finance Minister P Chidambaram summed up well the origin of terrorism while delivering the Field Marshal KM Cariappa Memorial Lecture: "There is the challenge of alienation of the Muslim community and, more recently, of the Christian community. The divide between Muslims and Hindus is taking new and dangerous forms – ghettoization, social boycott, discrimination in employment and the blurring of lines between state and religion as was seen in Gujarat. Out of the hopelessness and despair of the Muslim community – and, if not addressed firmly, the Christian communities too – will rise new waves of terror. There is no other explanation for the phenomenon of graduates and engineers and doctors – born, educated and living in India – taking to the path of violence."

Terrorists breed in states – Gujarat, Maharashtra, UP, Karnataka – worst hit by communal riots. The Gujarat carnage of early 2002 is a case in point. Harsh Mander had written at the time: "In Ahmedabad, most people I met agree that what Gujarat witnessed was not a riot, but a terrorist attack followed by a systematic, planned massacre, a pogrom.... Trucks arrived with young men in khaki shorts and saffron sashes armed with sophisticated explosive materials, country weapons, daggers and *trishul*s. The leaders were seen communicating on mobile telephones from the riot venues, receiving instructions from and reporting back to a coordinating centre. This was not a spontaneous upsurge of mass anger. It was a carefully planned pogrom....

"Police provided protective shields to crowds bent on pillage, arson, rape and murder, and were deaf to the pleas of the desperate Muslim victims, many of them women and children.... No riot can continue beyond a few hours without the active connivance and patronage of the local police and civil authorities. The blood of hundreds of innocents is on the hands of the police and civil authorities of Gujarat...."

Is Karnataka trying the "Gujarat model of state terrorism" against a smaller Christian community?

Days after the Gujarat holocaust, at the invitation of Wajahat Habibullah, Director, I had gone to the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration, Mussoorie for a lecture-cum-interaction with the probationers. For more than an hour, summoning all the oratory at my command, I dwelt on the brutalization in Gujarat and the collapse of basic governance in the state. I told them of the *raison d'etre* of the IAS and IPS and the stentorian words of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel exhorting the services and how it has miserably failed in Gujarat, his own home state. I told them of the shameful spectacle of senior civil servants meekly caving in to political diktat!

The probationers, soon to assume responsibilities of governance at the grassroots and enforce anti-terror legislation, were unfazed. The audio-video presentation by actress-activist Nandita Das vividly portraying the spine-chilling and gruesome killings in Gujarat and the abject official apathy had no effect on them! What is worse, some of the probationers reportedly rationalized the pogrom.

This, then, is the mindset of those manning the grassroots of governance. And the party that rules Gujarat and Karnataka wants them to be equipped with a harsher Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA)!

Astonishingly, the National Security Adviser has joined this bandwagon. He was the one who admitted to the pathetic state of India's intelligence system in a press interview in Singapore some weeks ago. He stated that, though 800 terrorist cells have been uncovered in the country, there was no clue as to where they were operating: "Clearly, there is some kind of

No riot can continue beyond a few hours without the active connivance and patronage of the local police and civil authorities - Harsh Mander

n the anvil?

e solution lies elsewhere

organization. We have to find out if that organization is localized or there is an external group or module operating."

Escalating inequalities, unbridled corruption, weak governance, intelligence failure and police bungling are the reasons terrorists have a free run in the country.

POTA's drastic provisions relating to bail (not before one year of detention), confessions (admissible as evidence even if made to police), and the shifting of the burden of proof (to the accused), give a field day to the police and the politicians

Instead of attending to this multiple malady, the leadership is indulging in semantics and brain-splitting as to the nature and content of anti-terror laws.

The Administrative Reforms Commission Chairman suggests a tougher-than-POTA package. "No. It is a draconian law and against human rights," says the Minister for Information and Broadcasting. The Prime Minister wants to strengthen the substantive anti-terrorism law in line with the global consensus on the fight against terrorism. The BJP bigwigs want a harsher and tougher POTA here and now.

India already has three pieces of legislation – the Indian Penal Code, the National Security Act and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act – to combat terrorist violence. While they have a semblance of magisterial/judicial control, POTA gives unfettered powers to the police to arrest and detain any citizen at will. With POTA's drastic provisions relating to bail (not before a year of detention), confessions (admissible as evidence even if made to police), and the shifting of the burden of proof (to the accused), it gives a field day to the police and its political mentors. The so-called safeguards against misuse are hogwash.

The fact of the matter is that POTA is draconian, liberty-killing legislation that in no way enhances the intelligence-gathering and investigative capabilities of the security forces. With the forces virtually functioning as tools of ruling establishments, POTA is susceptible to blatant abuse. As it is, the National Security Act is being misused against political opponents in several states including Tamil Nadu. A tougher-than-POTA law could target minority communities and make them victims of state terrorism, thereby spreading terror among the citizens instead of eliminating terrorism. g

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Swallow no more insult

Let the dissenters in the NSG know that they are either our friends or enemies

by Prakash Shah

THE Government of India and the Bush Administration worked hard to get the approval of the Board of Governors of the IAEA to the Safeguards Agreement as well as a waiver from the Nuclear Suppliers Group to resume nuclear commerce between India and the rest of the world. The incomprehensible BJP opposition to a process of nuclear cooperation with the US and the rest of the world, which it had started during the Vajpayee government, is only rivalled by the hardline but foolish ideological opposition of the Left to any cooperation with the West, unmindful of India's national interests.

In the euphoria of success, and the work which is now required to be done to cross the last hurdle of the US Congress, I find that scant attention is being paid to devising a policy to deal with the dissenters (Ireland, Austria, Australia, New Zealand, China, Switzerland and some others) in the NSG, who continue to masquerade as our friends.

It is necessary for India to put these countries on notice that, as an emerging nuclear weapon power, it will hold them accountable for the unfriendly attitude they have shown both at NSG and IAEA on an issue which India considers vital for its civilian energy requirements.

Is it not deplorable that, at times, the officials in the government doubted the intentions of the US, a country which has done the most to get this waiver through, while the government allows these so-called non-proliferation hardliners to go scot-free?

Whether, as a government, we have the courage to punish these countries is debatable. Our record on such issues is both soft and self-denying. However, if India seriously wants to become a Permanent Member of the Security Council and wants to be counted as a world power, then it must behave like one, at all times. Any softness that India shows towards those countries who tried to embarrass us in the NSG would confirm that we do not deserve Permanent Membership in the UN.

That leaves China, a proven rival and sometimes enemy of India, particularly when it comes to strategic help to Pakistan and inroads into Nepal, Burma and Bangladesh intended to weaken India. I do not understand, as a layman outside the charmed Delhi circles, why we are so afraid of China (and, for that matter, of Pakistan). When the NSG and IAEA have exposed China so clearly, then our China experts need to review and revise their pro-China views and look at the world more aggressively from India's point of view. The soft peddling of the Indian public's and media's anger at China by pro-Left Delhi intellectuals and the Minister of External Affairs during the recent visit of the Chinese Foreign Minister is yet another shameful demonstration of the huge inferiority complex that our successive governments have suffered vis-à-vis China. It is time India realized that, while China will want to continue trading and economic relations with India to its advantage, its policy to keep India off-balance and inconsequential in the Asian context

China's propping up Pakistan's ISI and military, and encouraging anti-India elements in Nepal, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Sri Lanka, is practically written in stone

Stern measures needed

The foreign policy establishment of India should call in the Ambassadors and convey a stern message that:

- India does not consider the issue of NSG waiver as purely a non-proliferation issue, as mistakenly believed by these countries.
- India does not accept that their opposition to waiver in the NSG was a product of their non-proliferation philosophy. India believes that their opposition was specifically intended against India and against India's national interest.
- India is particularly incensed by their double standards on their philosophy of non-proliferation, as they have been conspicuously silent on years of proliferation by China and Pakistan. In case they feign ignorance, India should provide evidence which is by now well documented internationally.
- India is disappointed at the repeated indifference to its impeccable record on non-proliferation, particularly when major countries of the world conspicuously acknowledged it.
- India considers the approach at the NSG an attempt to put unfair restraint on nuclear commerce and trade with a nuclear weapon country which has one of the cleanest records on non-proliferation.
- In view of the fact that India's government is a democratic one and must reflect the wishes of the people in the Parliament, India would have to take into account the public dissatisfaction with these countries when matters concerning trade and economic co-operation with those countries come up for consideration.
- The Indian public will not tolerate the Indian Government giving any contracts or favourable treatment to the corporations from such countries. They would naturally look favourably to big-ticket contracts being given to those countries that have supported India at the NSG. No country can be expected to do business as usual with countries that deliberately put hurdles while pretending to be friendly.
- India will continue to observe their attitude on issues of paramount interest to India, including civilian nuclear commerce.

by continuously propping up Pakistan's ISI and military, and by encouraging anti-India elements in Nepal, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Sri Lanka, is practically written in stone.

Our political parties, across all spectrums, must understand that their inability or unwillingness to exercise the power that India undoubtedly possesses is the biggest obstacle to India's search for international recognition as a world power or its ambition to become a Permanent Member of the UN Security Council. g

(The writer was Permanent Representative of India to the UN and Ambassador to the UN Conference on Disarmament)

Manmohan and Bush: handshake for a new era

Duped by Uncle Sam?

123 is not a triumph of diplomacy but a rush job for which the nation will pay dearly

by Niranjan Desai

THE popping of champagne corks with self-congratulatory SMS messages "Singh is King" making the rounds and staged drum-beating by Congress supporters at the end of the meeting of the Nuclear Supplier Group (NSG) countries in Vienna ended with a damp squib. All the wind seemed to have been taken out of the UPA sails when President George Bush, while forwarding the 123 Draft Agreement to the US Congress, made the following caveat:

"In Article 5 (6), the Agreement records certain political commitments concerning reliable supply of nuclear fuel given to India... [the] Agreement does not, however, transform these political commitments into legal binding commitments because the agreement, like other US agreements of this type, is intended as a framework agreement."

Of course, this was a reiteration of what the US Administration had assured Congress in January this year, as reproduced below. It had been in response to 45 questions posed by late Congressman Tom Lantos to the Department of State in October 2007.

Late Congressman Tom Lantos: grilled State Department

"Question 17: Do the assurances in Article 5 require the United States to assist India in finding foreign sources of nuclear fuel in the event that the United States ceases nuclear cooperation with India?

Answer: The fuel supply assurances are not, however, meant to insulate India against the consequences of a nuclear explosive test or a violation of non-proliferation commitments. The language of Article 5.6(b), ...does not provide for such insulation."

Further, in reply to question No. 18 about the consistency of the nuclear fuel supply assurances with the Hyde Act, the State Department said:

"There is no inconsistency between the fuel supply assurances contained in Article 5 of the US-India Agreement and section 103(a)(6)of the Hyde Act...These fuel supply assurances are intended to guard against disruptions of fuel supply to India that might occur through no fault of India's own."

These assurances were kept under wraps at the specific instance of the State Department to protect the UPA government when fierce debate was raging in the country about what compromises the government had made in the face of the Prime Minister's claims about uninterrupted fuel supply under all circumstances. When they were revealed during the NSG debate, the government dismissed them as internal discussions between different branches of the US government, insisting that only the provisions of the 123 Indo-US Agreement were relevant.

Now that the US Government at the highest level has reassured Congress that the political commitments in the 123 Agreement have no legal binding, the UPA government and the Prime Minister

have been exposed as either very naïve in trusting the duplicitous Americans or as collaborators with Bush in duping the people of India.

Notwithstanding Bush's assurance the second time around that the US is not legally bound to provide nuclear fuel supplies to India, all that the MEA spokesman could do was to mechanically churn out the assertion that India would only be guided by the 123 Agreement which would "become a legal document in accordance with well-recognized principles of international law and the Law of Treaties".

So we have a piquant situation (and very funny if it were not such a serious issue) even before the agreement is inked; while Bush says it is not a legally binding commitment, Manmohan Singh asserts it is. How do you resolve this problem?

Normally, all such agreements, including even routine commercial contracts, have an Arbitration Clause to settle just such differences in interpretation. But, to the surprise and alarm of all, this vital agreement has no Arbitration Clause at all. Article 15 on "Settlement of Disputes" in it merely states that any dispute concerning interpretation or implementation of the provisions shall be "promptly negotiated by the Parties with a view to resolving that dispute". The elementary question is: what if the dispute cannot be settled/resolved through negotiations/discussions? And such a situation has arisen even before the Agreement is inked!

It will forever remain a mystery why our negotiators showed such serious lack of foresight and judgment in not incorporating an elaborate Arbitration Article. A little research would have shown a precedent in the Japan-US 123 Agreement (which took almost two years to negotiate); it has an Arbitration Article that would have met all our requirements. Since the agreement is to last 40 years, it is to be expected that inevitable differences and disputes will arise and the lack of a comprehensive Arbitration Article will plague us with unforetold consequences, especially in the light of our past experience with the Tarapur Agreement and many recent actions of successive US governments in conveniently jettisoning international agreements.

It is thus not surprising that the entire process of negotiation took just five months, from March to July 2007. Similar 123s involving China, Japan and South Korea took years! To cap it all, the negotiations were concluded without a single lawyer in the Indian team, not even the Additional Secretary and Head of the Ministry of External Affairs' Legal and Treaties Division, let alone legal experts from the Law Ministry or from other experienced arms of the government. No wonder there is egg on the faces of the Indian team, starting from the very top!

Government-friendly media triumphantly proclaimed that India had arrived and taken her place at the Nuclear Table. Now we know it was a case of the mouse roaring. As reported by Glen Kessler in the *Washington Post* of September 12, the real situation is that the NSG at Vienna "privately agreed last weekend that none of its members plans to sell sensitive technologies to India, according to sources familiar with the discussion. The agreement undercuts one of the Indian government's key rationales for seeking a civilian nuclear deal with the United States – that it would open the door for 'full civil nuclear cooperation' with the rest of the world."

Yes, we shall sit at the Nuclear Table, but strapped into the baby's high chair!

No wonder, despite the brave face put on, sources both within and without the MEA report great disquiet in the Ministry and the Congress party that all is not hunky-dory with the Agreement. In a bid to find scapegoats and pass the buck, a lot of fury is being vented at the Americans. One top MEA official more or less conceded to a columnist that he had "been duped by the Americans" while another high official called the US Ambassador a liar when he asserted that the Americans had at every stage kept the Indians in the loop.

The entire episode, contrary to its projection as a brilliant exercise in diplomacy, has exposed Indian negotiators as naïve and omitting to read the vital fine print.

To encapsulate, I would say we bought a lemon and then tried to sell it as fudge when it became sludge! g

Joint session of US Congress: final voice

So we had a piquant situation (and very funny if it were not such a serious issue) even before the agreement was inked. While Bush says it is not a legally binding commitment, Manmohan Singh asserts it is. How do you resolve this problem?

श्री नरपत सिंह राजवी
चिकित्सा, स्वास्थ्य
एवं परिवार कल्याण मंत्री

बेटी जो देती मुस्कान....

श्रीमती वसुन्धरा राजे
मुख्यमंत्री, राजस्थान

कन्या को जन्म लेने दीजिए

आप
'बेटी बचाओ'
एवं पीसीपीएनडीटी एक्ट - 1994
के प्रभावी क्रियान्वयन में सहयोग करें

- गर्भ में भ्रूण के लिंग परीक्षण के लिए महिला को प्रेरित करना, दबाव डालना या अज्ञान में रख लिंग जाँच हेतु परीक्षण केन्द्र ले जाना, इसमे सहयोग करना, करवाना कानूनन अपराध है, जिसके तहत 5 वर्ष तक का कारावास व एक लाख रुपये तक का जुर्माना हो सकता है।
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चिकित्सा, स्वास्थ्य एवं प. क. सेवाएं
राजस्थान

MILESTONE

public-police partnership

Friend, not foe

An IPS officer spearheads a humanitarian mission for India and the world

by Sumit Bothra

IT was the realization that "fear of the police is greater than fear of crime" that made Dr Prateep V Philip, Inspector General of Police, who looks after human rights and social justice in Tamil Nadu, start the Friends Of Police (FOP) movement. FOP was an attempt to bridge the yawning gulf between the policeman and the citizen.

"The negative perception disempowers the police force. When I joined the Indian Police Service in 1987, I wanted to share the power I got from the people with them so that they would not fear the police but respect them," says Philip. He describes FOP as a multi-dimensional concept which could mean friends of police, friends of people, friends of press and friends of poor. FOP encompasses any role that a proactive citizen can play. When he began propagating the concept at public meetings and among colleagues, the response encouraged him to ponder a structure.

And then a life-altering incident occurred. In 1991, Philip was wounded in the bomb blast that killed Rajiv Gandhi at Sriperumbudur. In the mayhem after the explosion, he lay in a pool of blood, thirsting for water. It was a young boy from the crowd who brought him some water. On the spot, Philip decided to involve the public actively in policing.

His brainchild finally took concrete shape the next year, when he was posted as Superintendent of Police at Virudhunagar district. Settling into his first district posting, he was shifted to the sensitive Ramanathapuram district. Faced with the problem of coastal security and other challenges, it occurred to him that this was an ideal nursery for the seed of FOP. The movement was launched and close to 20,000 people were enrolled as friends of police in a district where the police strength was only 1,000.

The public gradually realized that FOP was not an unemployment avenue, but a voluntary service. It was an opportunity to serve and protect the community that one belonged to. Encouraged by the vernacular press, hundreds of men and women joined the movement. There were queries from across the state about FOP and requests for it to be started in neighbouring districts.

At a state-level conference in July 1994, Philip presented a cost-benefit analysis of the FOP programme and appealed to the state government to extend it to the entire state. The Home Ministry evaluated the proposal and issued a government order implementing the programme in the entire state. Thousands of people of all ages as well as the unemployed and retired volunteered in all districts.

The movement won global recognition in 2002 when Philip was awarded the Queen's Award for Innovation along with £15,000. The amount enabled him to set up a hi-tech multimedia training centre for FOP in Chennai. It is Asia's first such training centre and trained 35,000 friends of police and 35,000 police personnel from all ranks till March this year. The Tamil Nadu government now funds the training centre to the tune of Rs 20 lakh per annum.

Philip: a life transformed

THE state now has over 3,00,000 FOP members. Each is committed to prevent crime. In all police stations, every officer is accompanied by a couple of friends of police. There is an increase in the night beat by a factor of 1 or 2. They help to preempt law and order problems and crime, and even detect crimes. Fear of the police has reduced and awareness of the humane side of the police has increased. Intelligence and information flow has multiplied because FOP also acts as a Citizen Intelligence Network (CIN).

CIN is also a tool to counter terrorism. Terrorists no longer work in isolation nor do they focus on highly secured targets. They now ingrain themselves in the public and harm ordinary people in public places. The solution is either a tremendous increase in police surveillance or creating awareness at citizen level through FOP.

Philip is spreading the FOP movement at national and international level. Delegates from Kenya, China, the UK and US have come to study the model. Pondicherry and Bihar have recently introduced the programme. Its details, as a blueprint for community policing, are available in the book *The Friends of Police Movement: A Roadmap for Proactive People Protection*, published by ICFAI Books, and on www.friendsofpolice.net. g

In 1991, Philip was wounded in the bomb blast that killed Rajiv Gandhi at Sriperumbudur... he lay in a pool of blood, thirsting for water. A young boy from the crowd brought him water

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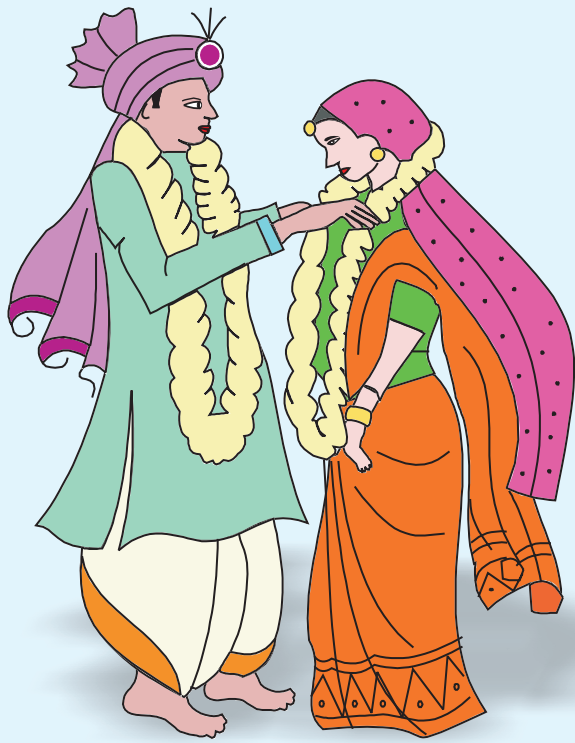
विवाह की सही उम्र



लड़की की 18
लड़के की 21 वर्ष
हो और
सुखद परिवार
के लिए हों
दो ही संतान

बाल विवाह कभी नहीं

बाल विवाह करना, करवाना या इसमें नाई, पंडित, काजी अथवा रिश्तेदारों द्वारा सहयोग देना कानूनन अपराध है। कानून का उल्लघंन करने पर सजा या जुर्माना अथवा दोनों दण्ड हो सकते हैं।

राष्ट्रीय ग्रामीण स्वास्थ्य मिशन एवं चिकित्सा स्वास्थ्य परिवार कल्याण सेवाएं
(आई.ई.सी.) राजस्थान, जयपुर द्वारा जनहित में जारी

gs sood

Leave the markets alone

WHAT has happened in the American markets is the biggest financial meltdown on Wall Street since 1929. The proposed bailout of the US financial system entailing $700 billion by the US treasury has to an extent controlled the damage and reinstilled some confidence in the system and the markets. Markets the world over cheered the bailout though mainly due to short covering but could not sustain the gains. Hence, the question foremost in everyone's mind today is – what will be the impact of crises in the American financial system, considered the main engine that drives the world economy, on the rest of the world including India.

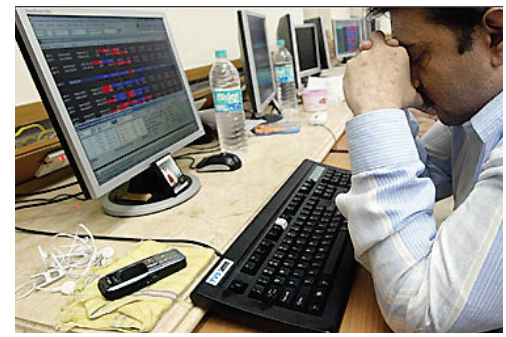
Early symptoms of slowdown are visible. Growth in direct tax revenue has started tapering off. Rising costs have started impacting corporate earnings

The myth of decoupling has already been shattered and the fact remains that India is very much linked to the health of the American financial system. The most prominent effect of the impact was visible when capital flows to the Indian stock markets got reversed; earlier the flow was due to the easy liquidity in the American financial system. The stock markets of the US, Europe and Asia, including India, fell correspondingly. Also, America's growth prospects now pose a big question mark. This may have a severe impact on industries that depend heavily on the US such as services, especially IT and financial services. Even industries having major exports focus, such as textiles, may get further affected due to the slowing demand in US and Europe.

The bailout will expand fiscal deficit in the US. This will result in a sharp rise in the inflation rate and a much lower US exchange rate. The weaker dollar and inflation may cause havoc for countries like India that are net commodity importers. The situation may further aggravate if other countries and the UK also decide to bail out their banks as well. Oil prices, though, have declined to around $100 levels which may be good news for countries like India. But falling share prices have led to a sharp erosion in the value of the Indian rupee which declined to a low of around Rs 46 per US dollar. This may be good news for exporters but is likely to offset substantial gains arising out of falling crude prices.

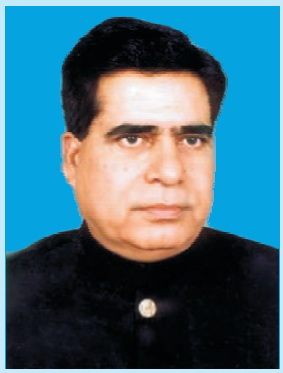
FIIs have been continuously dumping Indian stocks due to problems faced by them elsewhere in the world. Trading volumes have started drying up and raising new money has become extremely difficult. The US government will soon start the process of writing down the value of troubled assets it has acquired on a market to market basis. So, the coming year may see massive though gradual de-leveraging of balance sheets. Most of these banks are known to have created debt to the extent of 30 to 50 times their equity. For instance, Lehman Brothers leveraged financial assets worth $600 billion on an equity base of $25 billion. The de-leveraging exercise will lead to further drying up of liquidity in the US with possible global impact. Indian companies may therefore find it extremely difficult to access foreign funds. This may eventually make the economic slowdown more severe.

Back home, early symptoms of slowdown are clearly visible. Growth in direct tax revenue has started tapering off. Rising costs have started impacting corporate earnings. The advance tax data for the current quarter too is not very encouraging. Moreover, the earnings are likely to remain under pressure for at least another two quarters. Industrial production, indirect tax collection and service tax collection have all slowed. Losses in the stock market have in general depressed consumer sentiment and that may lead to lower spending in days to come. This may lead to further slowing of sales revenue for the corporate sector. The meltdown in the real estate sector may lead to worsening impact on industries with strong linkages such as steel, cement, electrical, paints and so on. In a nutshell, the days to come are likely to be quite turbulent. Owing to this, I am not recommending a stock and instead am advising investors to stay away from the markets till the dust settles.g



Wall Street's ripples are felt worldwide

Investment-related queries may be sent to gfilesindia@gmail.com with Dr Sood's name in the subject line.



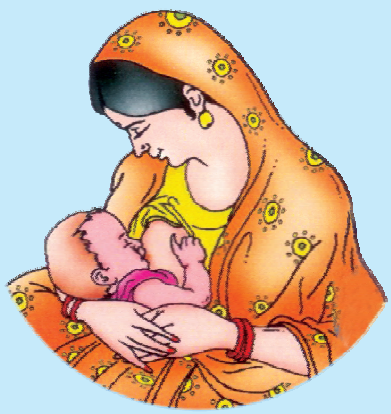
श्री नरपत सिंह राजवी
चिकित्सा, स्वास्थ्य एवं परिवार कल्याण मंत्री
राज्य मंत्री, राजस्थान

स्तनपान अमृतपान

श्रीमती वसुन्धरा राजे
मुख्यमंत्री, राजस्थान

- प्रसव के एक घण्टे में पीला गाढ़ा (खींस) दूध नवजात को अवश्य पिलायें, क्योंकि यह देता है जीवन भर बीमारियों से लड़ने की ताकत ।

- शिशु को स्वस्थ एवं सेहतमंद रखने के लिए सम्पूर्ण आहार के लिए छः माह तक केवल माँ का ही दूध पिलायें।



"माँ का दूध अमृत समान, भूल ना जाये माँ स्तनपान"

राष्ट्रीय ग्रामीण स्वास्थ्य मिशन एवं चिकित्सा स्वास्थ्य परिवार कल्याण सेवाएं
(आई.ई.सी.)राजस्थान, जयपुर द्वारा जनहित में जारी

Military ta

The government's abrogation of its responsibility in selection of armed forces Chiefs has allowed partisanship free rein

by Maj Gen Mrinal Suman

THE Indian armed forces have many unique organizational features. Most are discussed frequently in public debates. But one lesser known aspect is the total lack of meritocracy in higher appointments. Though equally applicable to all the three services, let us look at the Army alone for ease of understanding the issue.

Under the current system, a general-cadre officer of the rank of Major General is approved to become a Lieutenant General (Lt Gen). The Army has over 55 officers of the rank of Lt Gen in the general cadre at any time. Every Lt Gen with more than three years' residual service becomes a Corps Commander. Subsequently, on the basis of seniority, they become Army Commanders in their own turn, provided they have two years' residual service. The senior-most serving Army Commander gets appointed as the Chief of the Army Staff (Chief). As there is no selection beyond the rank of Lt Gen, all Lt Gens are considered fit to assume the post of Chief. Their inter-se seniority and age-wise placement in the hierarchy decides their future. Thus, at any given time there are over 55 officers who stand approved to head the Army.

Critics call such an arrangement an "auto-pilot ride" – an Army officer is required to prove his competence till he achieves the rank of Lt Gen. Thereafter, he rides on auto-pilot and makes career advances purely on account of his date of birth. The services are perhaps the only organization in the country which throw up top leadership solely on the basis of seniority. Merit ceases to play any role.

The wisdom of accepting the logic that every Corps Commander is fit to be the Chief is also questioned by many. A Corps Commander is a field commander of around 30,000 troops whereas a Chief wears multiple hats while heading 1.1 million-strong army. To equate the two appointments is untenable as leadership qualities required for a Corps Commander and a Chief can never be the same.

The current system has two major drawbacks. First, the services are deprived of quality leadership. Many brilliant military officers fail to move up solely because of their unfavourable age-wise placement. In the absence of merit, mediocrity prevails. The indifferent quality of senior commanders can be attributed to seniority-based promotions. The recent spectacle of senior officers questioning posting orders and fighting in public for chairmanship of clubs is testimony enough. Similarly, the apathetic quality of leadership was also on display when Chiefs found it irksome to travel to the Nilgiris to pay homage at the demise of a Field Marshal.

Second, the system lends itself to manipulation by smart functionaries and thus perpetuates a regime of patronage. Every Chief, on assuming office, obtains details of the dates of birth (and thus retirement dates) of senior officers and thereafter identifies prospective officers from his regiment or ilk. Before his tenure ends, he "manages" the system to ensure that the selected protégés are suitably placed and all likely challenges to their

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FOTOS4INDIA

Service chiefs: the auto pilot ride

advancement nipped in the bud. In other words, he firmly plants them in the line of succession. Earlier, such manipulation was done discreetly. Over a period of time, the practice has become so well entrenched that Chiefs have no qualms in openly flaunting their preferences. Worse, the milieu has got so used to this partisanship that it has come to be accepted as a normal practice.

Sadly for the country, most Chiefs remain myopic in their regimental allegiance. Instead of selecting the best talent for higher commands, their blinkered approach fails to see beyond Infantry, Armoured Corps and Artillery loyalties. Chiefs who have benefited from such preferred dispensation feel morally obliged to carry on in the same vein and extend similar benefaction to their regimental subordinates. Most representations and court cases to seek redressal of grievances are on account of this partisanship.

Many observers feel the Government has abrogated its responsibility under the plea that it does not want to be seen meddling in the internal functioning of the services. It lets the services throw up their leadership even at the cost of depriving the nation of the best talent available. This is a specious excuse. The Government's attitude of non-interference is construed by many to mean that it is not unduly concerned about the quality of leadership of the services as it matters little in the scheme of governance. Chiefs are not part of any major decision-making apparatus. Even critical proposals affecting national security are discussed by bureaucrats without any inputs sought from the services.

For selection of Army Commanders, a selection board under a Minister of State for Defence should be constituted to recommend names as per the laid-down criteria. The board should have the three service Chiefs and the Defence Secretary as members.

Most Chiefs remain myopic in their regimental allegiance. Instead of selecting the best talent for higher commands, their blinkered approach fails to see beyond Infantry, Armoured Corps and Artillery loyalties

The Military Secretary should be the member-secretary. Board recommendations should be put up to the Cabinet Committee on Appointments (CCA) after obtaining the concurrence of the Defence Minister. Selection of a Chief should similarly be done by a board under the Defence Minister, which should have as members the Minister of State for Defence, the three service Chiefs and the Defence Secretary. Final approval should be granted by the CCA, as per the prevailing orders.

The quality of the top military brass is too serious a matter to be left to the whims of service Chiefs. Date of birth cannot be the sole deciding factor. It is time the Government puts in place an evolved selection system to ensure that merit becomes the main criteria for promotion to higher ranks. The Indian armed forces deserve the best leadership. g

STRATEGIES FOR ME

Inclusive growth in today's global digital context is not simply about

by Abhilaksh Likhi

INCLUSIVE growth in rural India is a phenomenon that has been attracting tremendous public attention. For 800 million people who live in villages, access to relevant information and its sustained communication is a crucial factor that hinders such growth. Unavailability of such access, either due to systemic or socio-economic reasons, directly impacts the effective participation of approximately 250 million poor in 'bottom up' planning for rural development. A cross section of the poorest that need to be a part of the communication process includes minorities, Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes, women and other marginalized communities. Besides, academicians, experts, social activists and administrators argue that such communities could be more effectively empowered if, in some form, they can have an ownership stake in the means of communication that provide access to need-based and relevant information.

In the above context, the caste system is a major factor that influences the communication matrix deeply in villages and affects most aspects of an individual's life. The latter's position within the social structure affects access to resources of various kinds – where an inhabitant lives, the type of housing he or she enjoys, patterns of interaction with others and, in fact, communication of all kinds (non-mediated ie inter-personal, intrapersonal, group and mediated or mass media communication).

Thus, communication patterns, despite varying levels of mass media penetration (through newspapers, radio, television, cinema, multimedia and other mass messaging strategies) follow a complex multi-step process heavily conditioned by power, status and differential access to resources. In the wake of factors such as widespread backwardness, illiteracy and ignorance even today, opinionmakers and information receivers play a tremendous role in the flow of information amongst rural inhabitants that usually occurs at public places such as tea stalls, petty shops and informal interactions. This also impacts the traditionally embedded systems of local rural governance and its delivery mechanisms ie caste panchayats as well as the constitutionally backed *gram sabhas* within *gram panchayats*. Besides, the channel along which information flows and is shared is further influenced by family, kinship, sex, age, religious and occupational links.

Without doubt, the above generalizations about the dynamics of rural communication in India would vary from region to region. They would further be supplemented by the specific ethno-cultural milieu of village communities spread over the length and breadth of the country, which is very diverse in terms of language, cultural practices, mores and folkways. But it is certain that an individual's position within the social structure has considerable influence on the poorest of the poor's opportunities, experiences and patterns of interaction with others. This also impacts their outlook about how to perceive change since their world view, as a tunnel vision, remains limited to the immediate ecology, block, district or, at the most, the state headquarters.

Against the above backdrop, any operationalization of an IEC strategy for flagship rural development programmes in villages has to rise above the practice of using a major part of the programme's budget for 'promotion'. The latter as a concept is more related with print and electronic media public relations than with dialogic development communication.

Effective sensitization has to trigger both behavioural and cognitive change through the community's participation in

FOTOS4INDIA

Are NGOs doing it right?

The 1990s phenomena of media globalization and convergence of communication technologies in developing countries like India have also been accompanied by focus on public-private partnerships in rural development. The latter, amongst others, aim at institutionalizing a well thought-out information, education and communication (IEC) strategy, envisioned usually by a non-governmental organization (NGO) with the help of the local administration. IEC is a critical and budgeted component of most centrally sponsored rural development programmes. The purpose is to enable such programmes to achieve the objective of alleviating poverty not simply by reaching out to the poor and doling out cash but rather to sensitize them to be partners in the process of ensuring livelihood security. Further, the constitutionally backed systems of rural local self-governance ie

SSAGING

economic aggregates

rural India. First and foremost, use of traditional folk media like street plays, puppetry, dance dramas and ballads is a necessary prerequisite. Such media are more familiar, personal and credible. Since they are a part of an inherent oral tradition in villages for centuries, they are a very effective vehicle for communicating social messages.

Start-up and entry-point communication under most centrally sponsored programmes often neglect, either due to official apathy or lack of trained NGOs, the immense potential of participatory rural appraisal. Social mapping, transact walking, seasonality analysis and other modes are the most accessible means to plan the village-level 'shelf of projects' by and for the local community. In this regard, despite constraints of power politics, the *gram sabhas* are still the cutting edge forums where social audit as a feedback, by the community, can be exchanged about such grassroots appraisals.

Messaging strategies other than group communication through *gram sabhas* include hoardings, wall paintings, advertisements, fairs, exhibitions and public announcements. Such tools are particularly beneficial when it comes to making a visual impact in vernacular about a programme's basic objectives, especially on school children and women. Messaging material such as books and newspapers, due to constraints of varying literacy levels, have to consciously focus more on pictorial depiction than cramped instructions in print.

Besides, motivational incentives such as direct exposure visits to other successful projects by the rural community are the biggest capacity enhancer mechanism as compared to closed-door, one-way and non-interactive community communications.

Ownership of a television or a mobile phone is limited in a village to those who can afford it. Hence, terrestrial broadcasting, satellite communication and cable are mediums that need to overcome inbuilt constraints for horizontal access in rural India. Similarly, though the Internet and multi-media are vibrant mediums of communication, due to lack of skill sets, connectivity and broadband infrastructure, accessibility is restricted to minuscule rural communities in a few private sector or multilateral agencies-supported project areas. Nevertheless, use of multimedia tools in rural India is a critical component that needs to be factored constantly in the IEC strategies of our flagship programmes for purposes of global knowledge-sharing, accountability and transparency.

Effective sensitization has to trigger both behavioural and cognitive change through the community's participation

RADIO broadcasts, of course, are known to be the cheapest and easiest medium to access, permitting real time communication with the community. With new guidelines on low-cost community radio licensing for the rural hinterlands now in the public domain, IEC strategies should consciously plan to air message content in local dialects about the felt needs of a community in a specific geographic area of a district within a state.

The critical question of an appropriate prioritization of the above-mentioned IEC activities along the various phases of a flagship programme's implementation has been dealt with by reputed NGOs at variance. The *modus operandi* of civil society organizations such as MYRADA in Karnataka, Deccan Development Society in Andhra Pradesh, Kutch Mahila Vikas Sangathan in Gujarat and Alternative for India Development in Jharkhand are, however, aimed at building essential capacities of non-literate and marginalized rural communities. In this endeavour, use of all modes of communication, whether non-mediated or mediated, is organically rooted in the unleashing of self-help group activity by the poorest and an effective social audit by the *gram sabhas*. This creates the widest possible horizontal access that enables *gram panchayats* to act as fair service delivery windows of rural local governance in partnership with local administration and other reputed media non-governmental organizations.

The themes being focused upon by these NGOs include micro-credit management, lack of water resources, cyclical drought, female foeticide, girls' right to education, disregard for natural environment, livelihood security opportunities in agriculture, indigenous knowledge, capacity-building of the rural communities in book-keeping, bank linkages, information on development schemes and computer-based services involved therein.

Inclusive growth in today's global digital context is not simply about economic aggregates. It's more about engaging marginalized rural communities in an enriching dialogue to plan for themselves through public-private partnerships. g

gram panchayats by effective operationalization of IEC activities, are supposed to act as the fulcrum of efficient and transparent service delivery.

Flagship programmes of the Government of India such as Bharat Nirman, Sarv Shiksha Abhiyan, the Total Sanitation Campaign, the National Rural Health Mission and the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act aim at providing to the poorest the much needed social safety net that can protect them from the vicissitudes of distress and equity-related imbalances in rural areas.

But are non-governmental organizations, in tandem with the local administration and *gram panchayats*, able to design IEC strategies that draw a neat line between information activities that aim to publically build the external image of the project vis-à-vis communication activities that are dialogic in nature and establish horizontal community access with the poorest?

Jaswant with Donald Rumsfeld: at home among the powerful

JASWANT? PM? HUH?

Circumstances are likely to cause the BJP and allies to unite behind this erudite Rajput as their choice

by S Subramaniam

LET us fast forward to March 2009. The elections have thrown up a hung Parliament and half-a-dozen Prime Ministers-in-waiting are queuing outside Rashtrapati Bhavan. Who does the President hand the precious invite to? A Thakur from Rajasthan, Jaswant Singh.

Shocked? In disbelief? You don't have to be. For this is a perfect – even likely – scenario if you suspend conventional and convenient thinking and pay heed to the robust record of the person and the political dynamics of the situation.

Defence, Finance and External Affairs are important portfolios in India. A seasoned politician who has headed even one of these Ministries has a greater chance of being a prime contender for Prime Ministership. Jaswant has held all of these posts. Quite apart from his full-bodied innings as a seasoned politician, he is Atal Bihari Vajpayee's blue-eyed graybeard.

When Vajpayee bucked the party elders in 2004 and stubbornly opted for early elections, Jaswant stood by his side like a rock of Rajasthani granite. The early election turned out to be the BJP's Waterloo but Jaswant remained not only alive but positively kicking. He is still considered the most influential non-RSS person in the BJP. It is both a strength and a weakness.

The RSS has made no bones about its dislike of Jaswant. Flashback to March 1998. A midnight knock on the door of the sleeping Prime Minister. The bleary-eyed Chief Executive is startled by a visit from the RSS' Rajju Bhaiya accompanied by his acolyte Gurumurthi. The two warn him to keep Jaswant away from power. The wily old hawk of Indian politics nods his head and accompanies the two to the door. A few months later Jaswant inherits the External Affairs portfolio held by Atal, leaving the RSS to fret and fume. Much later, he is made the Finance Minister, disregarding a strict no-no by the RSS chief.

While no one doubted his prowess in foreign affairs, the Sangh Parivar did not conceal its derision for Jaswant's pro-US approach in economic matters. But everyone else was happy with Jaswant's handling of economic affairs. Even the UPA's Finance Minister lauded Jaswant, his predecessor in the NDA government, for bringing down both fiscal and revenue deficit.

PC Chidambaram asserted: "Thankfully, Jaswant Singh was a more capable FM." Providing the figures, he said fiscal deficit under Jaswant came down from 4.5 per cent to 4 per cent while revenue deficit was down from 3.6 per cent to 2.5 per cent. The compliment for Jaswant Singh was an indication of the equation that he enjoyed with Chidambaram. Party insiders point out that Jaswant refused to react to Chidambaram's February 29 Budget because he had "given a gentleman's word" not to do so to the UPA Finance Minister. Even an avowedly anti-BJP economic daily wrote that Jaswant's Budget may lack Ivy League sophistication, but it displayed a sensitive heart. As Jaswant said: "The poor man must get his food and the housewife have some money in her purse." This North Block novice demonstrated that he had the innate capacity to attract bipartisan appeal. Later he would display staying power by weathering the controversial Kelkar Committee report and riding out the UTI storm.

So Jaswant could well follow the precedent set by Manmohan Singh and be another case of a former Finance Minister becom-

Jaswant Singh is also the most influential non-RSS person in the BJP. If this was his weakness, it is also his strength

With Advani and Rajnath: waiting in the wings

Consider this

Party insiders know that the RSS is not particularly happy with the choice of Advani as the PM-in-waiting. The student wing of RSS is busy taking over the party and projecting Arun Jaitley as the future face of the party. So, why would this young lawyer want to play second fiddle to Advani when he can be number two under Jaswant? And, as PM, will not Jaswant require a handsome FM who could also speak English like an Englishman and think like an American?

ing Prime Minister. As for talk of pro-US bias, that too is something they share.

Not many people in Indian politics have Strobe Talbott as a friend and are on first-name terms with top US politicians like the President. After the 1998 Pokhran test, when Indo-US relations touched a nadir, Vajpayee wanted to mend fences with the US. He mentioned it to Jaswant and none other than President Bill Clinton came visiting. The dirty words "nuclear test" were buried.

Jaswant's guttural, accented manner of speaking makes people say he speaks like an Englishman. At a deeper level, he can also think like an American – a plus point for a PM of India.

On the surface, LK Advani is being propped by the BJP as its future PM. In his quest to be PM, he has even changed his astrologer. But the truth is that he is not the BJP's universal choice. The Gen Next young guns are waiting in the wings to be Prime Ministerial candidates too. But they are aware that they have to wait till Narendra Modi moves to New Delhi. So, while people like Murli Manohar Joshi await RSS backing, the way is clear for someone like Jaswant to ascend and the Vajpayee model of governance to be repeated.

Besides, if the BJP manages just a whisker of a majority, which ally would not have qualms about supporting a hardcore RSS man like Advani? And, for an alternative, would they not prefer a non-RSS BJP man who would be pliable? The era of all-powerful, towering PMs with massive party and constituency support is over. India has seen consensus PMs like HD Deve Gowda, IK Gujral and Manmohan Singh who do not have their own power bases and depend on their parties to give them "safe seats" during elections or nominate them to the Rajya Sabha. Jaswant, too, owes his election not to any formidable standing in his own constituency but rather to party giant and kingmaker Bhairon Singh Shekhawat. So, in this era of PMs without mass bases, who therefore can be manipulated by party bosses, Jaswant may well have his day.

Not many people in Indian politics have Strobe Talbott as a friend and are on first-name terms with US Presidents

TO undercut the BJP, the RSS brought in Suresh Soni, a lightweight, as politics in-charge. Soni has not met a single BJP leader outside his home state of Madhya Pradesh, so preoccupied is he with keeping his *bête-noir*, Madan Das, out of circulation. Naturally, he would not be bothered either way if Jaswant becomes PM. Besides, Advani made an enemy of Soni by dismissing him as a non-entity. It was Rajnath Singh who sent a Soni henchman to the Rajya Sabha.

The Advani group mainly consists of a handful of former Leftist journalists, now out of jobs, whose goal is to see Rajnath Singh, a Thakur from Uttar Pradesh, out. The clever Thakur is getting even by propagating a theory – that politics in this country is such that you need to belong to a minority group or a powerful caste to become PM. What he means is that Advani has no caste while the BJP has not one but two Thakur leaders – himself and Jaswant. So Rajnath's backing of Jaswant for Prime Ministership is a foregone conclusion.

Time and again, Jaswant has proved himself a Teflon politician to whom controversies don't stick. At the traditional *riyan* party at his ancestral home near Jasol last November, Jaswant was said to have served a drink laced with opium. The local court accepted his explanation that only Ganga *jal* and tea were served.

On another occasion, his detractors went to town over the complete absence of his wife from all social functions. "She is very conservative," he said but brought her to a party – the only time in six years as Minister. One son is a member of the Lok Sabha, but not much is known about his other son.

Jaswant's fondness for horses is well known. He is a leading member of the Equestrian Federation of India. Today, though, the expert horseman is riding a dark horse that may well come from behind to win the race. g

sk mishra

NOT JUST ANOTHER JOB

The brain behind Haryana's great leap forward recalls a career marked by head-on collisions with politicos

WHEN you are in a position of power, you should not betray the trust. That was my motto throughout my career. As a BA student in Kanpur, I did not have any idea about the IAS. Then my father, HN Mishra, who was Vice-Chancellor of Kanpur University, sent me to Allahabad to do MA (Political Science) in 1954. I stayed in AN Jha Hostel, known for producing the cream in both academics and sports, where my hostel mates were preparing for the IAS exam. I followed suit and cleared the exam in 1956.

In the Academy we were nicknamed the "all-bad-boys" because we were from Allahabad. Training was completed in Metcalfe House and I was allotted PEPSU (Punjab and East Punjab Union) consisting of Patiala, Kapurthala, Jind, Barnala, Sangrur and Malerkotla. Commrade Ram Kishan was Chief Minister. My first posting was at Barnala as Sub-Divisional Magistrate.

In 1966, Haryana was born. Without being asked, I was allotted the Haryana cadre. Pandit Bhagwat Dayal Sharma was Chief Minister. I was appointed Deputy Commissioner of Hissar. Rao Birender Singh became CM after Devi Lal and his group toppled Sharma's government. When Devi Lal wanted to have his political opponents arrested on flimsy grounds, the Chief Secretary sent me a message to arrest a particular leader. I refused as the old man had not done any wrong. The Chief Secretary called me thrice, but I did not yield. The next morning, I got a message to hand over charge and proceed to Chandigarh as Labour Commissioner.

During my posting in Hissar I came in contact with Devi Lal, Bansi Lal, Bhajan Lal, and BD Gupta. When Haryana politics became volatile in 1968, I came to Delhi and was posted in the Home Ministry. Haryana went to the polls and Bansi Lal became CM. I sent a congratulatory tele- gram and he telephoned and asked me to return to the state as Principal Secretary. He told me to meet him the next day at Gulzari Lal Nanda's house on Tughlak Road.

I had been in Delhi hardly a month and suggested he choose someone else as the Home Ministry might not relieve me so soon. He went to Chandigarh and shot off a letter to Home Minister YB Chavan. The latter called me and said, "I can't say no to Bansi Lal." I pointed out that the government of Haryana was shaky. He told me not to worry and that I could rejoin at the Centre whenever I wished.

The young state needed a lot of development work. Bansi Lal was very tough, ruthless, impulsive and development-oriented. One day, he announced that the bridge on the Ghaggar river would be inaugurated by Indira Gandhi. I thought it was a gimmick as the bridge was not even planned. But he fixed the date and made everybody work to meet the deadline and the inauguration took place.

I fondly recall an incident during my posting in PEPSU as Deputy Secretary. On the first day in office, I was reading a PG Wodehouse. Suddenly, I realized somebody was standing behind me. Turning around, I saw Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Pratap Singh Kairon. Nehru asked what I was reading and I told him. He talked to me for half an hour. Later, when I was Vice-Chancellor of Punjab Agriculture University, Nehru visited and asked if he had met me earlier. I said, "Yes, sir...PG Wodehouse." He recollected the meeting at once.

When Bansi Lal became Defence Minister, I moved with him as Principal Secretary. One day, he called me and said Sanjay Gandhi wanted Dhirendra Brahmachari to fly to Mantalai (Jammu) by a certain route. I suggested that the advice of Air Chief Marshal Hrushikesh Moolgavkar be sought. Moolgavkar advised that he could fly only along the predetermined route. Another time Sanjay Gandhi wanted to build a residential colony near an ordnance factory. The proposal was sent to General TN Raina, who opposed it. Bansi Lal sent me to convey this to Sanjay

The story of Haryana Tourism

I often travelled to Delhi by car with Chief Minister Bansi Lal. One day, we stopped outside Karnal beside a canal to have tea at a dhaba. I noticed a piece of barren land across the canal and suggested it be developed as a tourist resort where people travelling to Chandigarh, Srinagar and Punjab could eat and rest. The CM asked me to take up the responsibility. I agreed but on condition that funds would not be a problem, all power would be vested in us, there would be no political interference, and the Haryana Public Service Commission would not step in for recruitment of staff.

Bansi Lal agreed to all this but initially sanctioned only Rs 5 lakh for five years. But I spent Rs 3 crore in the first year. In five years we developed 27 complexes. But the then Finance Minister, Prabha Jain, wanted a private party to run the resort even though it was running at a profit. Whenever she said that money was being spent without any budgetary provision, Bansi Lal came to the rescue. When he and I visited a complex, we would check the kitchen and toilets. If found lacking in sanitation, the staff was immediately suspended.

FOTOS4INDIA

My minister, Lal Singh, had been my peon before. I called him, saying that I wanted to meet him. He came and sat on the floor, to my embarrassment

Gandhi, who became furious. He called the notes stupid and the functioning obstructive. He said the Delhi Development Authority Vice-Chairman Jagmohan was ready for the project. I reasoned with him, saying the colony could not be built there. If any mishap occurred, my neck would be on the block. I made the mistake of assuring him I would send the proposal again. He replied that we would again come up with stupid answers.

Two days after the fall of the Indira Gandhi government, I attended the wedding of the son of Dr KP Mathur, personal physician of Indira Gandhi. In the changed political scenario, everybody wanted to avoid him. But I met him and he said, "I owe you an apology." I was touched by his gesture.

When the Janata Party came to power, Devi Lal became Haryana CM and, in his very first press conference, announced that he would send me to jail. Innumerable inquiries were set up but nothing was found against me as I never let

Mishra: maverick achiever

Bansi Lal do any wrong. I kept going on medical leave or with half-pay or without pay. One day, I thought enough was enough and went with my brother to meet Devi Lal at Sauna tourist resort where he was camping. He was sitting on a charpoy under a tree. The moment he came to know I had come, he called for me. He seemed happy to see me and asked me to return to Haryana as his Principal Secretary. Showing willingness, I asked if he still trusted me despite his pronouncement that he would have me handcuffed. He replied that the inquiries had revealed that I had done good work for Haryana. When I asked him to consult his Chief Secretary, he said I was not to worry. He told me to join immediately and bring my luggage later.

When I reached Chandigarh to take up the assignment, I found that Devi Lal was in hospital. By that time, he had become a virtual prisoner of his sons, Sahib Ram, Om Prakash Chautala and Ranjit Singh. I met him in the hospital and, as I was coming out of his room, Sahib Ram confronted me and said he wanted to speak to me. I asked him to get an appointment from my

private assistant as I was not free for the next 15 days. The Chief Secretary, Isha Dass, used to take instructions from him.

Ranjit Singh also came to me and said that it was he who had suggested that I be brought back. He added that his problem was that every proposal he sent to the secretariat came back unattended. His hint was clear but I told him to have me removed by the CM and not interfere in the administration. If his problem was genuine, I would look into it.

One morning, Devi Lal called me. Chautala had been caught at the airport with smuggled goods and the CM wanted to resign. He asked me to call a press conference. I said he need not resign. He should tell the world that Chautala was no longer his son. This is what he told the press and the Chandigarh newspapers said that Devi Lal had set an example by disowning his son. I have never spoken to Chautala till today.

Devi Lal was a good human being. He was not vindictive and never punished even his enemies. He kept humanitarian considerations in mind. Bansi Lal, on the other hand, was a "*Yaron ka yaar and dushmanon ka dushman.*"

The Prime Minister, Morarji Desai, was against my appointment as Principal Secretary to Devi Lal. He asked Devi Lal why he had appointed me. Devi Lal replied that it was his prerogative to appoint who he liked. After Bhajan Lal toppled Devi Lal and became CM, he too appointed me his Principal Secretary. Again, Desai objected and asked Bhajan Lal to remove me.

Bhajan Lal told me about this and asked me to choose any department. I chose Social Welfare, where I was faced with a peculiar problem. My minister, Lal Singh, had been my peon before. I called him, saying that I wanted to meet him. He came and sat on the floor, to my embarrassment. I requested Bhajan Lal to shift me again and he did.

Indira Gandhi once wanted me to take over as Chairman of the Indian Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC). RK Dhawan did not like me and asked the Tourism Minister not to move the file and Chief Minister Bhajan Lal not to relieve me. I met Mrs Gandhi and informed her that Dhawan did not want me in ITDC. She then asked me to come to the Prime Minister's Office as Joint Secretary. The hint was enough for Dhawan to hurriedly get my file okayed for appointment in ITDC. As Joint Secretary in the PMO, I would have been senior to Dhawan and perhaps this was the message she conveyed to set him right.

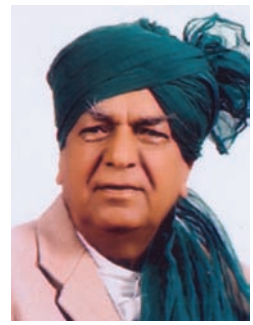
When Chandrasekhar became Prime Minister, he appointed me his Principal Secretary. He decided that Morarji Desai be awarded the Bharat Ratna. President R Venkataraman refused to confer the award on him on the ground that he had earlier been given the Nissan-e-Pakistan. He considered Desai a hypocrite. So a Joint Secretary of the Government of India went to Mumbai and conferred the Bharat Ratna on Desai. The press was told that the award was given to him at his residence due to his ill health.

I have never taken any job in a routine manner. I have always been busy building up institutions. I have set up Punjab Agriculture University, Moti Lal Nehru Sports Complex, Haryana Tourism, Suraj Kund Handicrafts Mela, National Institute of Fashion Technology and National Handloom Corporation.

Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Nehru, PN Thapar (Vice-Chancellor, Punjab Agriculture University) and Mangat Rai (Chief Secretary, Punjab) influenced me immensely. I learnt passion for work from Bansi Lal and Pratap Singh Kairon. g

The Moti Lal Nehru School of Sports

Haryanvis are simple and intelligent and, given the right education and environment, can excel in every field. Once I suggested to the Chief Minister that a school be built with provision for free education to those from the state. Bansi Lal felt that nobody would allow this for political considerations. Then I proposed the Moti Lal Nehru School of Sports (MLNSS) and he gave the go-ahead. I located a *panchayat* stadium at Rai near Sonepat. The *panchayat* donated 400 acres. Kunjpura Sainik School, Karnal had closed down and I wrote to the principal to join here immediately. Four newspaper advertisements got us 35 boys to start with. I brought the best faculty from Mayo College. Within two years we made it a coeducational school. I would visit every week and talk to the students. It has been running well for 36 years.



Bansi Lal, Devi Lal: serving with the toughest

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birthdays

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For the complete list, see www.indianbuzz.com

TRACKING

For a complete list of appointments & retirements, see www.indianbuzz.com

ARUN RAMANATHAN
The 1973-batch IAS officer of the Tamil Nadu cadre has been appointed Finance Secretary in the Government of India.

SATYANAND MISHRA
The 1973-batch IAS officer of the Madhya Pradesh cadre has been appointed Commissioner of the Central Information Commission.

ASHOK CHAWLA
The 1973-batch IAS officer of the Gujarat cadre has become Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance.

M MADHAVAN NAMBIAR
The 1974-batch IAS officer of the Tamil Nadu cadre has been appointed Secretary in the Ministry of Civil Aviation.

SUCHITRA GOSWAMI
The 1989-batch CSS officer is now Deputy Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.

VIJAY RAGHAV PANT
The 1978-batch IPS officer of the Uttarakhand cadre has been made Additional Director General, Crime, of the state.

D SUBBA RAO
The 1972-batch IAS officer of the Andhra Pradesh cadre is now Governor, Reserve Bank of India.

RASHIMA GUPTA
The 1984-batch IAS officer of the Himachal Pradesh cadre is now Principal Secretary, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, of the state.

RAGHUVIR SINGH
The 1972-batch IA&AS officer has been appointed Member Secretary of the Tariff Commission in the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India.

RK MISHRA
The 1987-batch IPS officer of the Madhya Pradesh cadre has been appointed Inspector General, Cyber Crime, in the state.

KS SRIPATHI
The 1975-batch IAS officer of the Tamil Nadu cadre has taken over as Chief Secretary of the state.

RAJIV SITARAM
The 1991-batch IDAS officer has become Director in the Ministry of Social Justice, Government of India.

MD SINHA
The 1989-batch IFS officer of the Haryana cadre is now Additional Inspector General in the Ministry of Forests and Environment.

SHANKAR AGRAWAL
The 1980-batch IAS officer of the Uttar Pradesh cadre is now Joint Secretary, Information Technology, Government of India.

RK JAIN
The 1981-batch IAS officer of the Himachal Pradesh cadre has become Chairman of the Himachal Pradesh Electricity Board.

SM ACHARYA
The 1974-batch IAS officer of the Karnataka cadre is now Secretary, Ex-Servicemen Welfare in the Government of India.

SEPURI SURESH KUMAR
The 1988-batch IAS officer of the West Bengal cadre has become Adviser, National Disaster Management Authority.

GYANESHWAR SINGH
The 1999-batch IPS officer of the Himachal Pradesh cadre is now Director, Security, Airports Authority of India.

PEEYUSH SONKAR
The 1995-batch IRS officer is now Director in the Ministry of Defence.

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Moving On: ias and ips officers retiring in October 2008

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SK Arora (1971)
AK Sharma (1971)

BIHAR
SK Sinha (1974)

CHHATTISGARH
BS Netam (1996)

GUJARAT
NR Pandya (1997)

HARYANA
Kartar S Bhoria (1974)

JAMMU & KASHMIR
Sadanand V Bhave (1973)
Devinder Nargotra (1989)

KARNATAKA
Abhijit Sengupta (1972)

MADHYA PRADESH
Anita Das (1972)

MAHARASHTRA
VK Aggarwal (1973)
RC Joshi (1973)

MANIPUR-TRIPURA
Harish C Mahajan (1975)

NAGALAND
RB Acharjya (1996)

PUNJAB
SK Ahluwalia (1990)

TAMIL NADU
P Langthasa (1976)

UTTARAKHAND
T Vaishnav (1990)

ips

ASSAM-MEGHALAYA
SN Talukder (1990)

CHHATTISGARH
SC Atre (1981)

GUJARAT
NV Patel (1987)

KERALA
Upendra Verma (1971)

MADHYA PRADESH
AR Pawar (1972)

TAMIL NADU
Paramvir Singh (1974)

UTTAR PRADESH
Ranjit Kumar Das (1970)

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Your unique magazine has now been around for just over a year. This was a testing period for our new venture supported by an initial working capital from professional journalists. From the enthusiastic responses we have been receiving we know we have passed with flying colours. Reader support has been overwhelming and for that we extend our deepest gratitude.

Nonetheless, because of the stringent production and newsgathering standards we have maintained, we have been absorbing significant losses. We fully anticipated them. But, thanks to our readers' patronage and loyalty, we have been able to build a quality brand that began to get advertising support from the third month after we commenced production. This, however, has been less than we were expecting in order to upscale our product and to give it better readability, visuals, and visibility.

We have decided, however, to expand the scope of our coverage in order to include areas such as IRS, Postal Service, Indian Defence Accounts Services, Railways, allied services, and more news from the states by increasing the pages and strengthening our team so that our readers will continue to receive exclusive, high-quality information that is not available to them through any other channel.

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INSIDE THE GOVERNMENT
'The party in power is invariably unhappy with us'
'Regulation of the steel sector should be the last resort'
PAY COMMISSION: A HIDDEN AGENDA

Highway to notoriety

NOW here's a dubious record. In less than a year, the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) sent three competent Chairmen packing. Pradeep Kumar, JS Maini and N Gokulram, belonging to the Haryana, Punjab and Tamil Nadu cadres, respectively, were reportedly shown the door for not being amenable

to the unreasonable diktats of the Union Minister for Shipping, Road Transport and Highways, TR Baalu. Obviously, the reason cited by the Minister is lack of performance and delay on the officers' part.

However, there is more than meets the eye. NHAI, whose Chairman has a fixed tenure of three years – extendable to five years – is responsible for the development, maintenance and management of National Highways entrusted to it. The Government of India has launched major initiatives to upgrade and strengthen National Highways through various phases of the National Highways development project. Of the 65,569-km length of National Highways in the country, Tamil Nadu has about 4,183 km. Sources say Baalu was desperate to have all the major roads in the state declared as National Highways so that he could make political capital of it during elections.

He kept pressuring the Chairmen to oblige him. When they refused to deviate from the stated policy of NHAI, Baalu took advantage of the compulsions of coalition government and got them shunted out. The fate of the fourth and current Chairman, Brajeshwar Singh, an IAS officer of the Tamil Nadu cadre, hangs in the balance.

Pranab, Menon's hide-and-seek

A Minister and Secretary usually work in unison but it so happens that Minister for External Affairs Pranab Mukherjee and Foreign Secretary Shivshankar Menon have not met since the UPA govern-

ment won the no-confidence motion on the nuclear deal. The deal has necessitated frequent trips by both babu and *babu moshai* to the US for negotiations with their counterparts. Strangely, Menon lands in the US after Mukherjee's return to India and comes back only after the Minister has once again flown to Washington. And, if by chance both are in the US at the same time, Menon goes missing.

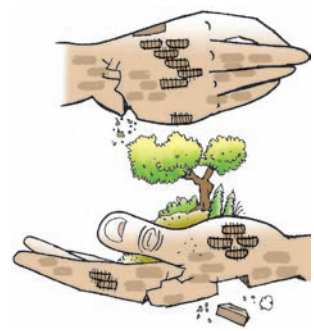
South Block mandarins were puzzled as to whether this was due to sheer coincidence or deteriorating relations between the two, until one day the mystery behind the apparent hide-and-seek was solved. Menon's US-based son is getting married soon and he devotes his time to making arrangements for the wedding rather than meeting the Minister.

Missing the wood for the trees

WHAT is done by bureaucrats is often undone by citizens. Former Environment Secretary of the Delhi government Naini Jaiseelan was deeply concerned about the encroachment on Delhi's green cover and the resultant loss of forests. She came up with the idea of enclosing the entire green belt with a high boundary wall made of iron bars.

Some of her junior officers, who did not view the forest in isolation from the community surrounding it, advised her against such an approach. She, however, went ahead with her project and allocated Rs 3 crore for it. The forest was duly encircled by a wall constructed of iron bars.

By the time she left Delhi to take up her new assignment as Chief Secretary of Puducherry, the citizens of Delhi, living up to their reputation, had dismantled virtu-



ally every iron bar for far more important uses in their homes than protecting a silly forest. She is now Adviser, Planning Commission.

Janus as lobbyist

THE tug of war over the coveted post of Home Secretary of the Union Territory of Chandigarh has finally ended. Ram Niwas, a 1985-batch IAS officer of the Haryana cadre, has emerged the winner.

Lobbying started after the post fell vacant in March this year. Various groups with clout jumped into the fray with their own lists of high-

ILLUSTRATIONS: ARUNA

flying babus as well as Dalit aspirants. On at least four occasions, the Home Ministry rejected the list forwarded by Haryana Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda through the UT Administrator, Gen SF Rodrigues, to Home Minister Shivraj Patil.

This time, Hooda, while taking credit in the state for sending a Dalits-only list, surreptitiously threw his weight behind Ram Niwas, an OBC officer, and thus killed two birds with a single stroke. Rodrigues, a powerful officer in the Home Ministry and a prominent builder combined to ensure that the recommendation was not sent back, and Ram Niwas got the post. g

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